

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: CI, PINT

SUBJECT: GENERAL LEIGH SPEAKS AT UNIVERSITY OF CHILE

REF: SANTIAGO 6558

1. JUNTA MEMBER GENERAL (AIR FORCE) GUSTAVO LEIGH AND U. OF CHILE RECTOR-DELEGATE GENERAL (R) AGUSTIN RODRIGUEZ SPOKE AT CEREMONY NOV 19 IN HONOR OF THE UNIVERSITY'S 132ND ANNIVERSARY.

2. IN EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS, LEIGH SAID GOC HAS BEEN CRITICIZED FOR APPOINTING RECTOR-DELEGATES AND INTERVENING IN THE UNIVERSITIES BUT THAT "THIS MEASURE WAS INEVITABLE, WAS INESCAPABLE, NOT BECAUSE THERE WAS DISTRUST OF THE RECTORS AND NOT BECAUSE THERE WAS DISTRUST OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THE COUNTRY WAS LIVING, AND STILL LIVES WITH AN INTERNAL SITUATION SO DELICATE THAT IT REQUIRED A JUNTA REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UNIVERSITIES." HE SAID THIS DIRECT REPRESENTATION WAS NOT A ROAD TO ABSOLUTISM, NOR DESIGNED TO REPRESS THE FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, BUT WAS INSTEAD A MEANS OF DIRECT CONTACT WHICH ALLOWED THE THINKING OF THE JUNTA TO BE CONVEYED DIRECTLY TO THE UNIVERSITIES UNTIL THE INTERNAL SITUATION RETURNS TO NORMAL.

3. HE SAID "OUR RECTOR-DELEGATES ARE TRANSITORY" BUT STRESSED THAT THEY WILL STAY UNTIL THE GOC DETERMINES THAT THE

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SITUATION HAS PASSED INTO A "SECOND PHASE" IN WHICH THE

UNIVERSITIES HAVE RETURNED TO NORMAL. "WE BELIEVE THAT TIME IS NOT FAR OFF; IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE STUDENTS AND THE TEACHERS, IN PARTICULAR."

4. COMMENT: FULL TEXT OF LEIGH REMARKS NOT CARRIED IN PRESS. "LA TERCERA" CARRIED STORY UNDER HEADLINE "GENERAL LEIGH ANNOUNCES ELECTIONS IN THE UNIVERSITIES". FIRST SENTENCE OF ARTICLE QUOTED LEIGH AS SAYING "WE BELIEVE THAT THE DAY IS NOT FAR OFF WHEN THE UNIVERSITIES CAN DIRECTLY ELECT (ELIGIR) THEIR RECTORS AND AUTHORITIES." HEADING IS OBVIOUSLY MISLEADING BUT APPEARS LEIGH DID ALLOW A LITTLE LIGHT TO BE SEEN AT END OF TUNNEL IN STATING THAT GOC APPOINTEES ARE NOT PERMANENT, AND THE DAY OF THE RETURN OF ELECTED UNIVERSITY RECTORS IS NOT SO FAR AWAY. LEIGH STATEMENTS MAY SIGNAL SLIGHT CHANGE OF THINKING WITHIN JUNTA ON LENGTH OF TIME NEEDED FOR UNIVERSITIES TO RETURN TO NORMAL. REFTEL REPORTED PINOCHET COMMENTS ON RECTOR-DELEGATES, INDICATING THEY MAY WELL BE AROUND FOR EXTENDED PERIOD, YET LEIGH COMMENTS APPEAR TO INDICATE A MORE RAPID RETURN TO ELECTED RECTORS THAN PREVIOUSLY PUBLICLY DISCUSSED BY GOC.

5. NOTHING OF SIGNIFICANCE IN RODRIGUEZ SPEECH, WHICH STRESSED NEED OF UNIVERSITY TO RELATE TO COMMUNITY PROBLEMS. POPPER

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